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The Martyr Prince.

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A SERMON

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN,

DELIVERED IN THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FRIENDSVILLE.

Sabbath Morning, April 23d, 1865.

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. S. C. BALDRIDGE.

CINCINNATI, O:

STEAM PRESS OF JOS. B. BOYD, 25 WEST FOURTH STREET.

1865.

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THE MARTYR PRINCE.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FRIENDSVILLE. *April* 24, 1865.

REV. S. C. BALDRIDGE:—

DEAR SIR: We, the undersigned, would respectfully request you to furnish a copy of the sermon delivered by you, at the Friendsville Church, on Sabbath, April 23rd, in memory of the late President Lincoln, (which was preached in accordance with a resolution requesting it, passed at a meeting of citizens, held at Friendsville, on Wednesday evening, April 19th,) for publication. Hoping thereby to subserve the cause of the Union and the maintenance of correct principles.

Respectfully yours, in the cause of truth,

WM. R. WILKINSON.
JAMES FOSTER.
JONATHAN SITHERLAND.
AARON B. HALLOCK.
A. A. GOULD.
ELIAS WALTERS.
GEORGE MCHEFFEY.
WILLIAM HILLIS.
FRANKLIN DANFORTH.
JAMES GUMM.
DAVID DICKSON.
SAMUEL CARBAUGH.
JOSHUA WOODS.
N. R. GROUT.
JOHN F. YOUNGKEN.
HORACE BLOOD.
LEVI COUCH.
JAMES P. MCNAIR.
WILLIAM NAYLOR.
THOS. WILKINSON.
FRANKLIN ANDREWS.
JOHN C GILKISON.
B. F. TAYLOR.
WILLIAM PIXLEY.
LEWIS W. WHITE.
W. P. KINGSBURY.
——— ADAMS.

FRIENDSVILLE, WABASH CO., ILLS., *June* 4, 1865.

HON. W. R. WILKINSON, A. B. HALLOCK, ESQ., REV. W. P. KINGSBURY,
JOSHUA WOODS, DAVID DICKSON, N. R. GROUT, ELIAS WALTERS, &C.

GENTLEMEN:—The sermon, written out from brief notes, at my earliest convenience, is hereby placed at your disposal. One thought persuades me to submit my own judgment in this matter to yours. Your names represent every religious denomination in this region. And if, when these struggles that now engross us are passed, this sermon will serve to explain the sentiments and the position of the great body of the christian public during the time of trial, it will be of service in making up the history of this Country.

Yours very sincerely,

S. C. BALDRIDGE.

THE MARTYR PRINCE.

Know ye not that there is a *prince* and a *great man* fallen this day in Israel?—II Samuel, iii, 38.

How terrible is Death! Whether it comes to remove the ancient and honorable, or strikes down the strong man in his pride and hope, or settles upon the children of your households like a frost out of the untimely skies on the lovely blossoms of Spring, it always appals us. Within the little circle bereaved it awakens a flood of tenderness, and hushes the clamor and uproar of this world. Sometimes, doubtless, the most valuable thoughts, the profoundest convictions, the most subduing views of life and death, of time and eternity—the vanity of one and the solemnity of the other—are gathered amidst the seclusion of a home desolated for us by death. But yet beyond the stilled precincts the stir of life may be as busy as ever. But *here* is a death that has affected a *nation*, and stopped the breathless chase of business, and filled all hearts, from our crowded sea-ports, on through towns, and villages, and hamlets, to the solitary cabins in the frontier, with one thrill of anguish. What mean these mourning badges; these drooping banners in the sanctuary; the "passing bells" over all the land; the minute guns in the Army and Navy; these saddened groups in the streets; this vast and tearful throng?

Ye know that a "Prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel."

Taking this lamentation of David over the assassination of Abner

for my text, I will be governed by the line of thought it suggests in the meditations that are to occupy our thoughts for this hour of sacred service.

The reasons of the bitterness of David's grief were two, one public and the other personal. One was because Abner was a "Prince" in Israel, and the other because he was "a great man." One was the public loss sustained, and the other was the worth and virtues of his murdered friend.

Both these elements are blended in the lamentations of the nation over the death of the President. We mourn him as a Prince. His death touches every generous nature with pity. It is affecting to see that the highest honors of the nation, the mead of universal confidence, the applause of his countrymen, and all the grandeur of earthly glory and exaltation could not screen him from the common doom. But this sentiment is too fine to account for this wide-spread mourning.

The death in office of the Chief Executive is a national calamity, because it tends to throw our public affairs into confusion, and relax the supremacy of law and order. It is a gratifying evidence, to be sure, of the inherent life and vigor of our institutions, that the government is found sufficient for the emergency, and that it moves harmoniously on without a jar or collision. The world, it may be, will gather new confidence in the stability of the Republic. But we know that the fell design in the murder of the President in the midst of our national troubles, was to bring all disorders and anarchy into our national affairs, to disorganize the government in the presence of armed and bloody Treason, to weaken, confuse, and destroy it. The bullet that murdered him was aimed at our national life. This is what has aroused us, this has made the death of the President a thing to thrill the people with horror and indignation.

But this Prince was no hereditary Ruler. He could claim no descent of royal blood. He ruled alone by the free votes of the nation. He was elevated to the Presidency, as all his predecessors had been, because of the popular sympathy with the principles which he represented. What first called him to power was a long-growing reaction in the nation against the insolent encroachments and usurpations of the Slave Power in the Government. When the barbarous spirit of Slavery had developed its inherent tendencies in Treason, Secession, and War, there was engrafted upon this original sentiment a boundless enthusiasm for the preservation of the Union. Both these sentiments have grown in intensity and influence with the progress of the strife. Every battle-field where your fathers, brothers, sons

have fallen by the hand of traitors, has enlisted your sympathies for your bleeding country anew, and revived the solemn oath that our murdered heroes must not perish in vain. And as we have seen the spirit of Slavery displayed on the stage of this war before the eyes of the world, in the barbarities and atrocities perpetrated in its behalf, the tone of inconceivable hate that has actuated the South, the starving and freezing, and inhuman abuses of unarmed prisoners in their hands, the butchery in cold blood of Federal soldiers after they had surrendered, there has grown in the national heart a wide-spread and sterner abhorrence and execration of the system.

Mr. Lincoln stood in the popular affection as the great protector of these two principles—The Union and Universal Liberty. All loyal eyes were fixed on him as the foremast man in this struggle to maintain them against treason and secession, and as we see him fall by the hand of the public enemies, all the pent-up sympathies of the nation for these noble principles, are poured forth in lamentations over him. Never was mortal so mourned by the noblest of his race. O, martyred Prince! O, loved and honored Chief! fallen in this struggle for human liberty and the existence of a free Republic, thou hast the mead of thy ransomed country's tears.

But in addition to these views of the public loss, there enters into the national grief, to a very unusual extent, a feeling of esteem and veneration for the *man*—"*a great man* has fallen."

I know that I shall gratify the mournful feelings of the hour, by lingering for a time over the qualities of his personal character.

The first feature of his greatness to which your attention is asked, was the *power* and *comprehension* of his mind. One of the very first conditions of true greatness in a ruler is a mind of compass, grasp, and firmness. Nothing can atone for the lack of this. He may possess the literary elegance of Lamartine, or the military genius and the craft of Marlborough, in vain. No training in a familiarity with time-honored precedents, no intimacy with the usual details of statecraft, no tact in the management of party machinery, is adequate to secure a broad and noble confidence among men at a stormy and revolutionary epoch. There must be conspicuous power and comprehension of mind.

When our late President took the Executive chair, he was an untried man. He was of that plain and homely mold that the world is slow to appreciate. But gradually the confidence of the Nation began to rest on him. All who would see, soon could see, that he fully understood the terrible crisis, and viewed all the endangered interests of the country in a broad, practical, and common-sense light. They

discovered him to be a man who eschewed fine-spun theories and speculations, and kept fast hold of certain old-fashioned principles that everybody could understand. He had the eye to pierce through the maze and confusion of our affairs, and see what was to be done, and the steadiness of purpose to enter boldly on its accomplishment by the most practical means. Some of his measures were in advance of his times, but history has already set her favorable verdict on the more important of them, and his countrymen, who once doubted, now applaud their wisdom and statesmanship.

2nd. His *independence* of mind. He weighed all things in the scale of his own judgment. Apparently the most credulous, docile, and pliable of men, yet when once he had *satisfied* his mind on a question, and matured his opinions, he was unhesitating and inflexible. He was to be shaken from the ripe convictions of his judgment, by no threats nor mockery of his country's foes, by no lack of sympathy on the part of his friends. This gave firmness to the Government. All parties knew what they could depend upon. There might be many counselors but there was but one chief. There was but one policy, one unflinching, earnest, honest purpose in the government during all his administration, because there was one brave, unflinching, earnest, honest man leading its counsels.

3d. Another element was the *serenity* of his mind. In all his State Papers we see nothing that approaches to passion, fright, or confusion. No statesman of our age has proved himself so entirely above the influence of party trammels and jealousies. He appeared to possess, by the happy constitution of his mind, the power of abstracting himself from the obscurities, the prejudices and the passions of the present, and to behold all questions on which he was called to decide, in the serene lights of sound reason and the experience of ages. Nothing was more important to the nation in our Chief Executive in the emergency, than the possession of this noble characteristic. His elevation to office occurred at the stormiest period of his country's history; when party frenzy was fiercest, and old ideas were changing, and old plans and policies, and precedents were utterly inadequate, and the spirit of Treason was exulting in the ruin of the Republic, and every lover of his country was dumb with horror and uncertainty. What tongue can tell the adorable mercy of Providence in raising up for us, then, a "spirit that could look on the tempest and be never shaken," who could move through the scene undismayed, unaffected by the clamors of political passions, endeavoring to do justice to all, and to love mercy. He possessed what the elder Pitt so commended in a Prince, and what our Washington was remarka-

ble for—the power of looking at present questions with the same deliberation with which ordinary mortals look back upon the questions that perplexed former generations, and that have long ago been solved by time and Providence.

4th. Another element of his greatness was his Benevolence. He was kind, genial, gentle, and unselfish. Trained in the hardy school of poverty, he had learned that a mutual dependence, a radical unity of rights, interests, and cares really subsists among mankind. No exaltation, no opposition or abuse, ever changed or checked the constant flow of his kindly feelings. The tide of his genial humor never ebbed. He looked on mankind with a brother's eye. In the city of Springfield, where he was best known, he was without a personal enemy. The blessing of the poor and of him that was ready to perish came upon him. This goodness of heart is conspicuous in him as a ruler. The whole policy of his administration towards the rebellion has been one of as great clemency as was at all compatible with that firmness and energy which were necessary to break the military power, which was the only power of the conspiracy. The sword has been wreathed about with the olive branch of Peace. His messages, his amnesty proclamations, and all his words to the South, were as a father's arms stretched out to the violent and injurious prodigals. At the very time of his murder, his magnanimous mind was busy maturing a scheme of re-construction, embracing the most liberal terms, and full of nothing but mercy to the insurgent States. Well might the rebel leaders say that "the death of Mr. Lincoln, *just now*, was the heaviest blow the South had yet suffered." Verily, they have killed the man of mercy, with their own suicidal hand, in the very hour when they needed most his vast and unimpassioned mind and boundless magnanimity. Indeed, may we not see in this one of the providential reasons for the permission of this tragedy. We are come to a stupendous epoch. The question now is, shall treason be considered only as an innocent experiment with the stability of the government, or as the highest crime known among men. Shall all future generations be taught that to conspire to destroy our liberties is to pluck down death upon the heads of the conspirators as the enemies of mankind? That the laws will certainly be executed? This is to be decided now for all the future. Mr. Lincoln, with the inborn goodness of his nature, was but poorly qualified to act as judge, and dispense the awful awards of justice and law upon the perjured and blood-stained leaders in treason. And from this he has been relieved, but in a manner that will ensure the ends of righteousness. There has a great change passed over

the spirit of the Nation. The current of a credulous sympathy was beginning to flow towards the ruined Traitors. Since they had not succeeded in destroying the Government, we were falling into the absurdity of pitying them for their want of success and their misfortunes. This murder, perpetrated in their behalf, and by their inspiration, has violently checked the tide. The mingled pity and horror that now reigns in every heart will give way to a firm conviction, that compassion for the leading conspirators is out of place, that the cockatrice of treason cannot be charmed, that it must not be nourished, that the public safety requires that the laws be rigorously executed.

But the crowning glory of his life, and of this age, is the part he was permitted to take in the destruction of the system of human slavery in this land. The boundless magnanimity of his nature, his benevolence, his inborn honesty, has ever arrayed him against it, at heart. But as long as we could hope for peace in the Government with it, he stood faithfully by all the compromises by which slavery was fostered and cherished. Even after the slaveholders had plunged the country into this war, we find him still solemnly respecting the old repudiated pledges. Rebel property was guarded, rights respected, slaves returned, and every evidence given of the pacific spirit that reigned in the nation; and it was only the implacable hostility and violence of the South that compelled the Government, at last, to gird itself for the strife, and accept the stern issue forced upon it, to *suppress* the *Rebellion*, or *perish*. Then came the real "tug of war,"—every lawful means to weaken the hands of the rebellion was resorted to. Among these was the Emancipation Proclamation, by which the workers, "the hewers of wood, and drawers of water" for the Confederacy—the producing class of the South—were made wholly unreliable, and transformed into men who loved and prayed for the Union cause as they loved and prayed for their liberty. It was adopted as a military measure, and was effective in disorganizing this main element of the strength of the rebels. But its military aspect is lost sight of in its moral grandeur. That act, by which he was made the instrument of restoring the rights of human beings to *four millions* of our fellow creatures,—*the last slaves in any civilized nation*—who had been sold in the shambles, and driven in the field as cattle, will forever make him most illustrious throughout all lands. It will enshrine his name in the affections of mankind, hard by the glorious names of Howard and Wilberforce, the philanthropists, and Hampden, and the early heroes in the struggle for human liberty. As time passes, his memory will be more revered; and

when the bitterness of party prejudices is assuaged, this nation will learn, throughout all its borders, to admire the righteousness, the true political sagacity, and historic glory of the *great Emancipator*.

Another element of his greatness was the remarkable *simplicity* and *integrity* of his character. He was of humble origin, and the molding years of his life were spent on the frontier. The hardy virtues, the simplicity of mind and manners, that he had learned in the pioneer cabins, never deserted him. They survived all the expansion of his mind by after study, his experience of courts and travel, and the giddy exaltation that awaited him. He was the same man, true to nature, without a taint of affectation, with all the untutored ease and freedom of his native frontiers, in each of the varied scenes of his life. Never was there in the executive chair so perfect a representation of the people, so true a type of the hardy, honest, toiling, sunburnt millions of his native West. Had we known the momentous future, perhaps all would have preferred to have chosen some of the more elegant and courtly of our public men to have represented us as our chief Executive before the gazing nations. It is certainly a wondrous Providence that, just at this juncture, when Republican institutions were about to be put to a fearful test, and the blaze of this gigantic strife was to attract the eyes of the world, and the vital powers of free government were to be illustrated, such a man as this should have been elevated to the gaze of mankind. The nations saw, as they looked to these Western shores, a civil leader without the polished elegance of the courtier, a man of true genial republican simplicity, with a certain rugged strength and manliness about him, and an open, honest way of treating of all things, the very farthest possible removed from the old forms of state-craft and diplomacy. What a picture was this, my countrymen, of the real character of this protestant nation, and of our free institutions. Nothing like it was ever exhibited, on the stage of history, so noble, so true to nature, without we may turn our eyes back to that grand age when honest, liberty-loving, godly Oliver Cromwell was lifted up by Providence to show the down-trodden nations of Europe what mettle the *common people of England* were of. Every honest man, every truly virtuous man in this land, even though he live in a cabin and wear homespun, and toil for his daily bread, had a *brother* in simplicity of character, honesty of purpose, broad common sense, and every element of native nobleness in our foully murdered President. O, weep, fellow-citizens, weep; let your tears fall fast: hush not these sighs of bitter grief, for he is worthy of your lamentations.

Another element of his greatness was his religious convictions.

This, after all, is the basis of that enduring affection and admiration in which his memory will ever be held among mankind. His *moral* greatness is his true greatness. We are disposed to refer many of the most striking and valuable features of his character to the existence of true religion in his soul. His cheerfulness, the open sincerity of his nature, the habitual solemnity of his thoughts, his energy, coupled with moderation, his unselfish and boundless benevolence, his mercy and justice as a ruler, all seem very like the usual fruits of grace in the soil of a great mind. It is to be bitterly regretted that he did not make a public profession of that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which he often confessed in private to his more intimate friends. But we will dwell with gratitude, for a moment, upon the intimations we have of his piety:

1st. His voluntary statement to Rev. Dr. William Adams, of New York, of his love for Jesus, as his Saviour, and that he had made a long delayed surrender of himself to God, for time and eternity, on the bloody field of Gettysburg.

2d. His well-known custom of spending the early hours of each day in the reading of the Holy Scriptures.

3d. The devout spirit of his proclamations. There is in them an undertone of reverence for God, of penitence in the confession of our national sins, of dread of the divine judgments, of utter dependence on God for all safe counsels, and all success in the public defence, that is new in the Government, and is in striking harmony with these days of rebuke. Their spirit is something better, unspeakably better, than the bold and vague Deism that has characterized these state-papers since the days of the elder Adams. They have the sweet odor in them of humble and positive religion. No one can read his last Inaugural Address, and his proclamations appointing days of national thanksgiving, or prayer, without feeling that the late President was a Bible reader, and was perfectly anxious that God—the God of nations, the helper of all that *fear* Him—should be *diligently* sought unto. He often and earnestly said to clergymen and pious friends, "*Pray for me;*" and upon one of them once asking him: "Mr. Lincoln, do you ever pray for yourself?" he simply answered: "How should I *do* without prayer?" He evidently regarded the national calamities as the chastening of God for the national sins, and so endeavored to walk reverently with solemn awe and sincerity of heart, as became the momentous times. His chief anxiety was to know what it was right and fitting that he should do, that the impending judgments might be averted. He constantly urged that national penitence, justice, and righteousness alone, could remove the

devouring sword from our land. Whether he had tasted the saving power of renewing grace, of course we cannot positively decide; but this we know, that he exhibited in his opinions, spirit, and life, some of the noblest traits of Christianity. This profound religious element in his character gave him his moral greatness. This was the rich soil out of which his illustrious virtues grew.

This prince and great man has fallen! How sadly, beyond all words to express, we come over this lamentation of David at the assassination of Abner, and feel that it is true of us this day. Alas, that the good, and the virtuous, and the exalted patriot cannot live in immortal vigor among us. How this recalls the language of the Psalmist—himself a prince—"Verily, every man at his *best* state is *altogether* vanity."—Psalm xxxix, 5. Nothing can purchase for him a reprieve that he shall not see death.

Man can attain to great heights of exaltation among his fellow men. As society is constituted, the guardianship of the interests of the many is committed to the few. In the natural working of things the public confidence gathers around the man who exhibits ability, skill, and faithfulness to the interests confided to him. He is lifted from one station of power and influence to another. In a monarchy a man is honored in proportion as he subserves the policy of the king and devotes himself to the interests of the priviledged classes—as was Richelieu and Cardinal Woolsey. But in a Republic, he is exalted just in the proportion that he is true to the welfare of the all-controlling masses. Republics are not ungrateful. Sometimes the sleepless jealousy for the character of all entrusted with authority, that this form of government begets, may judge too harshly; and sometimes the shallow demagogue may rise to a momentary power, but in time all is corrected. Among us, "the memory of the wicked rots," but sooner or later the faithful servant is rewarded. Honors, trusts, affections, cluster around him. But all this can give him no immunity from mortal ills. He may reach the magnificent elevation of the Presidency of this free Republic—an elevation all the more sublime because conferred by the confidence of the nation in his wisdom and integrity, and the sympathy of the nation with the noblest principles that can swell the human heart; *but all in vain*—"Man at his *best state is altogether vanity.*" The decay of nature, the ravages of disease, or, it may be, the cowardly bullet or dagger of the assassin, may arrest him in the midst of his career and push him off the stage where he is enacting glorious deeds into the silence and dust of death.

But these are not the thoughts that oppress us this morning. A

consideration of the frailty and vanity of this mortal life, though it has formed the staple of many a proud elegiac strain, ~~our~~ every departed greatness is too vague to arrest or satisfy our distracted thoughts. This foul, barbaric crime over which we are mourning, suggests to the patriot heart far more urgent and practical lessons. Let us ponder some of these. It will be but an idle service whatever thoughts and feelings may have been awakened, unless we learn and feel some, at least, of the sad and stirring teachings of God's providence.

The *first* and most important for *us*, as a Christian *people*, to learn, is the *necessity*, in order to the maintenance of the public virtue and security, of *imbuing* the *nation* with the principles of *scriptural morality*.

"A Prince has fallen." But, how? By the bullet of an assassin. But who is the assassin? The son of an eminent English tragedian, and trained for the stage. He is a legitimate product of the theatre, the drinking saloon, and the gambling hell. His views of life, courage, honor, and all moral questions were formed in those dens of vice and infamy. They are such as pass current in those circles, and form the staple of the sentiments and opinions of that whole class of our citizens. It needs but a dash of hair-brained daring, or the inspiration of passion to transform them in a moment into monsters of crime. And so it must ever be. Eliminate the Bible with its lofty standard of morals, its inner checks, pure sentiments, its gentle and solemn calls to virtue, and its revelation of the future, and how long would it be before the inbred corruption of the human heart would burst all barriers and lay waste our heritage of liberty and peace? How long would it be before we should return from the zenith of our civilization to the horrid cruelties of barbaric ages? Here we have a class in the midst of the light and quickening of this age, but to whom the Bible was unknown, and, lo! what a moral ruin,—what lonely depths of unfathomable corruption and foulest sin! And what more is needed to make the spirit of this assassin and his horrid conclave, the spirit of this whole nation, than that the *same moral views*, the *same tastes*, and the same lawless *profligacy* prevail? O, let the same opinions, the same scenes of dissipation and infamy, the same worse than heathenish ignorance of the heavenly standard of truth and righteousness out of which this awful wretch sprang, be universal, and all our virtue, law, and tranquility would perish in one stormy night of crimes, of devouring corruptions, of secret cruel plots, and bold and bloody barbarities. What agency will you array to face this foe of our peace and liberty? Whither will you look for help? What can inspire far and wide over the land the knowledge,

love, and practice of righteousness? Will the tragic sentimentalisms of the stage do it? Booth was an actor. Can the accomplishments of cultivated society, and all the embellishments of literature, art, and learning? Alas, alas! Behold the dissolute morals of the Augustan age—the pontificate of "Leo, the magnificent," and the polished reign of the Stuarts. He knows but little of the human heart and its history, who dreams of stopping the tides of its corruptions by such vanities. They rather give a method to the madness, sharpen the capacity for mischief, and lend the dangerous charm of wit and refinement to the vilest profligacy.

What society *needs*, is some means that can powerfully *counteract* these sentiments, can rebuke and discourage these *passions* and destroy the *taste* for such iniquities. And all this the "Gospel of Peace" proposes to do. It comes like our better angel, to explain our duties to one another in all the relations of life, and our duties to God, to enjoin upon us the noblest motives, and the most heavenly affections, and enforces obedience by the most moving and solemn considerations. It fixes upon the conscience an ineradicable conviction of our accountability to God for all our opinions and actions. Under its influence men begin to grow careful, sincere, honest, sober-minded, as knowing that for all they will be brought into judgment. Vice loses its charm over the mind convinced that its mad pleasures are bought at the terrible hazard of final ruin. An invincible check is put upon the evil passions of the heart in their secret and hidden springs in the soul. The virtues that adorn and bless society grow up spontaneously. This holy power of the Gospel is conspicuously exemplified in the lives and characters of the truly pious; but still it exerts an unspeakable influence in behalf of righteousness over the masses who may not be savingly transformed by it. You may see this illustrated in history. What is it makes the immense difference between heathen and christian civilization? To come nearer: What has given us our free institutions, and that virtue and intelligence, and mental and moral activity in which alone they can exist? Was it not our Protestant religion, in its elements, and that alone, which lifted our ancestors in the islands and forests of North Europe out of barbarism, and exalted them through ages, and refined them in many a heroic struggle and grand awakening, until, at last, in the fullness of time, it breathed the lofty thought of a free Republic into their kindling minds, and nerved their arms to achieve it? And think you that any other than the Mother of Liberty can nourish her glorious child? What then, hearers, is our duty? To spread this holy word of life far and wide. To bring its heavenly precepts, its

instructions in righteousness, and its spirit of love and purity to bear on *all* our fellow-citizenship. *No class must be overlooked.* No tangled valley, nor lonely wilderness, nor hive of vice can be left neglected. The elements of barbarism, and anarchy, and social ruin lurk in every corner of our land that is unilluminated and unwarmed by the genial rays of the Gospel.

Let every patriot, then, every lover of his country, every one who would see her expanding liberty, her growing virtue, intelligence, and prosperity, give the weight of his influence and the best energies of his life to exalt the Bible in this land. O, how miserably do they mistake who withdraw their aid and sympathy from the church on political grounds. As though this Republic *could exist* without the *Gospel* and God's *sole and only missionary society*, whose work it is to carry it with its temporal and eternal blessings to men throughout all our borders. These will have nothing to do in the promotion of religion, and in the work of making this a *righteous* nation—a people beloved of the Lord—because, forsooth, some of their political opinions are condemned by the moral convictions of the Christian public For this, they are willing that the work of evangelizing this land should stop, the cause of religion should be given up, the churches closed, the restraints of the Bible removed, the tides of vice flow unchecked, and the light and glory of our civilization be extinguished. O, hearers! is there one of you into whose soul this madness has entered?

The seeds of *political atheism* have been sown broadcast in this country by the violence of party strife, and are growing fearfully. I can see one of these deadly shoots, in this widespread cry, that religion and politics are to be kept distinct. Be not deceived, brethren, in this plausible sentiment. It means *now*, not that church and State must be separated in this Government, and there be no civil church establisment as in England, and no ecclesiastical despotism in public affairs, as in Austria, but only *this*, that the divine counsels to us *as a nation* are not to be *explained*, *applied*, *respected*, or *obeyed*. If, by any means, a moral question is thrown into the political arena, and parties are arrayed in hostility over it, no difference how clear the divine word may be respecting it, the sacred oracles must be dumb and God's blessed and awful voice hushed, as though the Bible were not the sole expounder of true liberty, and did not explain, with a supreme and infinite authority, our duties in every possible relation of life.

Another noxious shoot of this political atheism, you may see in the bold avowal of an honored political leader of a former generation,

that "legislators, as such, are under no obligation to know what the will of God is," (Hon. Richard M. Johnson, of Ky.,) or, in the later and sadder declaration still, by Congress, and that in the midst of the divine interpositions for our national deliverance from treason, "That it was not expedient to so change the preamble to the Constitution as to recognize God, as our God as a nation, and the authority of the Christian religion." (See action of Congress on the report of Hon. L. Trumbull, of Ill., from the Com. to whom were referred the petitions of various religious bodies respecting this.)

Near akin to this, is the sentiment often heard on the street, and at the fireside, that in adopting political opinions, all reference to their moral aspects must be laid aside. The question whether they *right*, in harmony with the eternal principles of *justice*, is not to [illegible]. Our opinions are to be framed and embraced alone on the grounds of policy, expediency, and the prospect of success. Are you a christian, hearer; and have you adopted such a sentiment as this? Do you not perceive in this the devil's deep laid plot under cover of the frenzy of party prejudices, to banish the Bible as the standard of truth and righteousness, and besot the moral sense of the nation?

All this political atheism—this denial of God and his authority—bodes no good to our country. With this spirit universal, our true prosperity is impossible. There is a solemn message from God, to which we will do well to take heed: Isaiah, lx, 12—"For the nation and kingdom that will not *serve thee* shall perish. Yea, those nations shall be *utterly wasted*."

What a work is before you, christian patriots, in exalting the word of God as the infallible standard by which to test all opinions and measures. Not yet is its sovereign authority recognized by our citizens, and the necessity of our hearkening to its divine counsels, in order to our national peace, virtue, and safety. It remains that you plead boldly and ever, that the private character of the people, the public laws, and the national policy be moulded by the precepts and the spirit of the Holy Scriptures. This awful war should teach us nothing more impressively than that nothing can be *politically safe* that is *morally wrong*. Sin—national sin—however excused, apologized for, or openly defended, is an element of national ruin, and sooner or later will pluck down the judgments of God. "Righteousness exalteth a nation." We have trusted for security to the plots of politicians, the intrigues of the wily demagogue, the counsels in which the "Lord of all the Earth" was despised, and a guilty wealth and splendor wrung from the unrequited toil and the degradation of

millions of slaves, and we have seen the result. Shall we not begin to hear the admonitions of God as the admonitions of a friend? "I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit. O, that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness," &c.—Isa., xlii, 17, 18.

The secret of our liberty is our Protestant religion, and that preached far and wide over all the land, with "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," alone can make and keep us virtuous, can save us from public corruption, from deadly conspiracies, from treason and sedition, and breathe peace, and love, and righteousness over the renovated Republic.

I have dwelt so long upon this momentous theme, that there is little time for anything farther. But we must not close without considering briefly two other most urgent lessons of this event.

2d. The necessity for cultivating a general spirit of forbearance and moderation in political conflicts. We are naturally impatient of all differences of opinion. With some, the tendency is to become intolerant, rash, and violent. One of the gravest difficulties in the practical workings of our republican institutions is that they seem to cherish and stimulate this partizan opposition. Every election seems to let loose anew the political rivalries, the pent-up animosities, the clash and collision of heated prejudices. This almost necessarily begets the low and foul spirit of demagogism. The newborn liberty, implied in the choice of our rulers, is often almost lost sight of, and an election becomes a mere unscrupulous scramble, by fair or unfair means, to secure office and power. No fraud is too base, no calumny too bitter, no slander too false and vile, to be eagerly perpetrated, if it will but compass the end. In the heat of conflict, but little heed is given to the melancholy fact, that the demon of variance is being evoked and fostered, who will not always be allayed. A spirit of hostility—of bitter, burning rancor—gathers strength with each struggle, and the seeds of sedition, anarchy, and ruin grow up apace. What, then, alas! are we to do, who love our free institutions, and feel that the welfare of mankind is best promoted by their spread and perpetuation? *Three things remain to us:*

1. Let every citizen cherish a steadfast charity towards those who differ. This is that spirit of forbearance, kindness, and good will which the Gospel enjoins. Let all try to feel that our fellow-countrymen who may differ from us as to the measures which may best secure the national welfare, have the same interest in the security and prosperity of the country with ourselves. And moreover, if men differ honestly, let them differ. The "right of private judgment"

is too precious to us as freemen, to surrender at any price. We must maintain this noble principle and its exercise, with constant and jealous care.

2. Strive to imbue the masses with the fear of God and the love of truth and righteousness. Toil with a weariless patriotism to bring every citizen to feel the solemn fact that he is accountable to the Lord of all, for the opinions he entertains, and the inner feelings he cherishes, as well as the conduct of his life; to feel that all is wrong and guilty that departs from the upright, the noble, and the honest in principle, spirit, or practice; that a lie and a villainy is ever a lie and a villainy, and is so regarded in heaven; that the end does not justify the means; that God beholds the tricks, the frauds, the calumnies, the frenzied and willful misrepresentations of party zeal, with the frown of righteous indignation, and that He will hold the perpetrators to a terrible accountability in the Judgment of the great day.

3. Let every citizen set it down in his heart, as one of the conditions of our liberties, that the majority is to rule. Our government is gone when this principle is given up. If ever a reverence for the will of the majority comes to sit so loosely upon the popular conscience, that it can be easily shaken by appeals to partisan passion and prejudice, then the door is thrown wide open for civil disorders, conspiracies, violence and anarchy. How shall we settle political issues safely, except by submitting them, with a generous confidence, to the judgment of the masses having a common interest in public affairs. Depend upon it, in this Government, if we refuse the arbitrament of the ballot-box, there is nothing left but the bloody arbitrament of the sword.

The cordial maintenance and exercise of these principles will regulate and control the inherent dangers in our Republican institutions, arising from the heated political controversies, to which they give loose reins and every possible stimulus. Let there be everywhere a generous respect for the opinions of others, the fear of God and love of righteousness, and a reverence for the will of the majority, and then our frequently recurring elections will but arouse a living interest in public affairs, promote intelligence among the citizens, impart a knowledge of our liberties, foster the profoundest spirit of patriotism, and confirm the government in the affections and confidence of the people, its most invincible rampart.

3d. The necessity of cherishing a *loyal respect* for the rulers of the land. This is the last lesson from this mournful tragedy to which your attention is called. By this is not meant a blind and servile

admiration of the man, but a generous deference to him in his official capacity. There may be a difference of sentiment as to measures, but we are to respect the civil ruler as invested with authority to maintain law and order, by the providence of God, On this point, about which there is such a difference of opinion, I will just rehearse the Law of God: Romans, xiii, 1—"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." I Titus, iii, 1—"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Peter, i, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors. For so is the will of God."

The spirit of mind we are to cherish towards our civil magistrates is implied in the repeated injunction to *pray* for them: 1 Timothy, ii, 1, 2—"I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority." Oh, how different is this to the spirit of fierce and biting obloquy and vituperation in which so many of you formerly indulged. That same feeling cherished has led to this assassination, and will ever, under one pretext or another, tend to unhinge the public confidence in the laws, and destroy the public tranquility. There *is a necessity* for your cultivating a loyal respect for your rulers.

But we can linger no longer here. We must leave this sanctuary. We must go down to face our country's dangers, to grapple with our duties as Christians, and as citizens, to look into the momentous future and provide for it. But as we go let us cheer ourselves with two reflections:

1st. God is a God of justice. A cause that is born of fraud and treachery, is sought to be established by hate and unheard of barbarities, and that laughs alike at human rights and human woes, can *never succeed.* Heaven's righteous retributions hang over it, and sooner or later will fall. Let us stand by the principles of truth and righteousness, and the spirit of our christian civilization, and we shall see the Confederacy perish, and the monstrous and deadly moral and political heresies out of which it arose.

2nd. We must not doubt but that God has mercy in store for us. Let us look at his wondrous dealings with us. When a nation is to be preserved, Providence raises up men equal to the emergency

whatever that may be. The spirit of the nation rises with the dangers that menace it. Has this not been the case in this crisis? Does not the world wonder at the overwhelming enthusiasm of the American people for the Republic? Did ever a civil war bring out so many patriots, in every arm of the national service, whose names will be illustrious for splendid talents and deeds of historic glory? When Babylon was to be destroyed, no one was found more competent to lead in her defence than the voluptuous Belshazzar. But when cruel Phillip invades the Netherlands with his victorious armies, lo! *William of Orange* appears to rally his handful of patriots to the dreadful onset, and amidst the shock of arms and scenes of heroic daring, the Dutch Republic rises gloriously. O, fear not, hearers, "a Prince and a great man has fallen," but God who endowed him so richly with talents and virtues, and gave him to his country in her extremity, has not left us, now that he is dead, to feeble counsels and broken arms. Look at the crisis, and look at the men that Providence has nourished to meet it, and take courage. You may know by the spirit of the nation, and the heroes of the times, that our mission among the nations of the earth is not yet finished. We shall survive these horrors. We shall overcome, and let us all fervently pray that we may escape these dangers, to be a nation "loving righteousness and hating iniquity"—to be that "happy people whose God the Lord is."

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